

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAR ES 00913 030835Z
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T DAR ES SALAAM 0913

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PFOR, TZ, UG
SUBJECT: TANGOV ATTITUDE ON SITUATION IN UGANDA

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 0828

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT NYERERE'S SUGGESTION OF FEBRUARY 24 FOR
US ACTION AGAINST AMIN IS REPEATED. MY REACTION IS STILL NEGATIVE.
GUIDANCE IS REQUESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. BERNARD MUGANDA, FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE AND
THE AMERICAS AND CONFIDANTE AND RELATIVE OF PRESIDENT NYERERE,
ASKED ME TO HAVE A DRINK WITH HIM AT HIS HOUSE NIGHT OF MARCH 2.
HE SAID HE HAD JUST COME FROM PRESIDENT NYERERE WHO HAD ASKED HIM
TO SEE ME (A) TO FIND OUT JUST HOW MUCH PRESIDENT CARTER KNEW ABOUT
THE UGANDAN SITUATION AND (B) TO MAKE SURE THAT I HAD GOTTEN
NYERERE'S "MESSAGE" IN HIS FEBRUARY 24 CONVERSATION WITH ME
ABOUT UGANDA.

3. I SAID THAT I DID NOT ASSUME THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WAS ABLE TO
READ EVERY CABLE I AND OTHER AMBASSADORS SEND TO WASHINGTON BUT
I THOUGHT PRESIDENT WAS WELL-INFORMED ON UGANDAN SITUATION, AS
EVIDENCED BY HIS RECENT STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS ON THE SUBJECT,

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INCLUDING THOSE IN RESPONSE TO AMIN'S ESCAPE WITH AMERICANS IN
UGANDA. ALSO, I HAD INDEED GOTTEN PRESIDENT NYERERE'S "MESSAGE"
IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH ME. AS I HAD INDICATED TO PRESIDENT
NYERERE, WHAT I WAS NOT ALTOGETHER SURE OF WAS MY REACTION TO
THAT MESSAGE.

4. MUGANDA ASKED IF I HAD SEEN LONDON OBSERVER EDITORIAL FEBRUARY

27 ON "TAMING AMIN." NYERERE HOPED IT COULD BE BROUGHT TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ATTENTION. I REPLIED THAT I HAD READ IT. SINCE PRESIDENT NYERERE WISHED, I WOULD CERTAINLY UNDERTAKE TO CALL IT TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ATTENTION (ASSUME TEXT AVAILABLE IN THE DEPARTMENT.) FOR MY PART, I HAD NOTED THAT THE EDITORIAL CALLED FOR INTERNATIONAL DISASSOCIATION FROM AMIN AND I BELIEVED THE US COULD CERTAINLY BE COUNTED UPON TO SUPPORT THAT; INDEED, WE WERE ALREADY OUT IN FRONT. EDITORIAL ALSO SAID THAT REMOVING AMIN FROM POWER WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD BE DONE ONLY BY UGANDANS, POSSIBLY WITH SUPPORT FROM FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS.

5. MUGANDA REVERTED TO THEME THAT "SOMEBODY MUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT AMIN." TANZANIA HAD ACTED DIRECTLY IN THE PAST AS THE OBSERVER EDITORIAL SAID, BUT IT CANNOT MOVE AT THE PRESENT TIME, HOWEVER, IT KNEW THAT AMIN WAS FRIGHTENED TO DEATH WHEN "YOUR FLEET" WAS IN KENYA. I SAID I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD HAD REASON TO BE. I ADDED THAT I HAD NOTED WITH APPRECIATION THAT TANGOV HAD APPARENTLY NOT BEEN FRIGHTENED EITHER, AS NOT A SINGLE HOSTILE WORD HAD BEEN SAID TO ME HERE ABOUT THE NUCLEAR TASK FORCE PORT CALL AT MOMBASSA. "WE WERE HOPING YOU WERE GOING TO GO IN AND GET HIM," REPLIED MUGANDA. "WE WOULD HAVE CONDEMNED YOU PUBLICLY, OF COURSE, BUT PRIVATELY WE WOULD HAVE SAID 'THANKS'."

6. I REMARKED THAT I WONDERED WHETHER THE GRADITUDE WOULD HAVE BEEN LASTING, AS NEITHER WE NOR TANZANIA COULD EXPECT TO CONTROL WHAT HAPPENED IN UGANDA AFTER AMIN, AND EXPERIENCE INDICATED THAT OFTEN THINGS BEGAN IN SUCH A WAY TOOK UNEXPECTED TURNS. AMIN WAS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE WICKED LEADERS IN THE WORLD, BUT I WAS DISTRUSTFUL OF ANY POLITICAL CHANGE WHICH DID NOT GROW OUT OF

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THE WISHES AND ACTIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY CONCERNED. HOWEVER, MUGANDA NEED HAVE NO FEAR THAT I WAS MISSING THE TANZANIAN VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

7. COMMENT: WHAT WE HAVE ON THE TABLE IS A CLEAR INDICATION THAT NYERERE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE US UNDERTAKE MEASURES TO GET RID OF AMIN. MY GENERALLY NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE IDEA TRANSMITTED REFTEL WAS FORMULATED BEFORE AMIN'S ESCAPE WITH AMERICANS IN UGANDA. THE LATTER CERTAINLY CONSTITUTED A REMINDER THAT WE STILL DO HAVE IMPORTANT INTERESTS IN UGANDA, I.E., WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS THERE.

8. IN CONVERSATION WITH MUGANDA I AGAIN AVOIDED A FINAL RESPONSE TO TANZANIAN PROPOSAL. THE DOOR REMAINS OPEN; INDEED, TANZANIANS HAVE PUSHED IT A FEW INCHES WIDER. NEVERTHELESS, FOR THE REASONS INDICATED REFTEL, I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD STAY CLEAR OF THE KIND OF INVOLVEMENT SUGGESTED BY NYERERE. I NOW THINK, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS DESIRABLE FOR ME TO RESPOND TO NYERERE ON THE SUBJECT THE NEXT TIME I SEE HIM RATHER THAN SIMPLY

IGNORING
IT AS ORIGINALLY RECOMMENDED IN REFTEL.

9. I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO PUT THE RESPONSE IN A BROAD CONTEXT, DRAWING ON THE MATERIAL ABOUT THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY PROVIDED IN AMBASSADOR MARSHALL'S REPORT OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT KENYATTA (NAIROBI 2606). ALSO, I REALIZE THAT TIMING ON RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA INITIATIVES CANNOT BE DICTATED BY MY PARTICULAR NEEDS HERE, BUT WOULD LIKE, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, TO GO ON TO DISCUSSION WITH NYERERE ON THESE SUBJECTS. (CONVERSATION ON THEM WOULD HAVE TO BE SEPARATE FROM OR PRELUDE TO CONTEMPLATED JOINT DEMARCHE WITH BRITISH IN VIEW OBVIOUS SENSITIVITY UGANDAN MATTER.)

10. YOUR GUIDANCE WOULD BE APPRECIATED.
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